

WILDLIFE JOURNAL

2010

A Publication of the Mercer County Wildlife Center

Volume 10, Issue 1

FLYING HIGH : *my almost-true recollection of the release of flying squirrels*

BY JO CLANCY

I have been associated with the Mercer County Wildlife Center for years, and I have loved every minute of it! I work with the best people, my Wednesday morning crew, and look forward to my volunteer day more than my day off. I brought in a litter of five flying squirrels (*Glaucomys sabrinus*) that had been dropped off at my veterinarian's office. Diane Nickerson, Director, and I decided that I would release them, and another litter of squirrels, the following Wednesday. "How exciting!" I thought, and how hard could it be? Famous last words!

My volunteer responsibilities are primarily medical treatments, and the winter season can be slow for injuries, so I was finished pretty early and ready for my adventure. Nicole Golden, my partner in crime, had also finished early. (I secretly believe that she is bionic but she will not confirm this). I was naïve enough to think that I would have no trouble releasing the squirrels on my own, but Nicole always manages to quadruple the "fun-factor" of any project we are working on together, so I thought she would be a great addition to this one. My conversation with Nicole went something like this:

Me: Hey Nic, wanna release squirrels with me?

Nicole: When? Now?

Me: Yeah! It should only take an hour and a half, or so. Come on, it'll be fun! A piece of cake!

Nicole: Sure, let's go!

(This is when you know that Lucy and Ethel are about to get into real trouble!)

We loaded up my car with hide boxes, a step ladder, a hammer and nails, extra food to sprinkle on the ground, my camera to record this precious moment and two glass aquariums full of squirrels. Flying squirrels are tricky little suckers, so you cannot just put them into any old carrier for transport. They can squeeze or chew their way out of most containers. So, Nicole and I decided it would be easier to just bring them in their tanks. When you are releasing squirrels in the winter you need to make sure they have a good food source, which means evergreens,

because they live on the tiny seed cones and sap. I had spotted a number of evergreens amidst the leafless trees around a reservoir that I pass on my way to MCWC, so that is where we were headed.

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Flying squirrel



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The Mercer County Wildlife Center is operated and maintained by the Mercer County Park Commission.

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Dear Friends,

There has never been a more exciting time to be part of the Mercer County Wildlife Center. The new Wildlife Center is a unique, modern facility that not only allows greater possibilities for treatment and rehabilitation of our wildlife, but new opportunities to engage and teach the public about nature. This facility is one of the only sites of its kind in all of New Jersey, and it is part of our continuing commitment to be respectful and responsible stewards of our native environment.



Over the past 26 years, the Mercer County Wildlife Center has provided an invaluable service to County residents and to our surrounding communities. In 2009, our staff and volunteers treated 2,144 animals at the facility and handled more than 11,000 telephone inquiries from the public. As County Executive, I am always awed by the number of our residents who choose to volunteer their time in the effort to aid the native wildlife of the area — in total they supply more than 11,000 hours a year — and I'm equally grateful to the many businesses, organizations, veterinarians and others who donate a variety of goods and services. The Wildlife Center would not be operational were it not for this volunteerism.

2010 was an unprecedented year for the Center. Inside this newsletter, you will find a wealth of information on everything from unfamiliar animals, diseases that threaten our wildlife, and facts and insight from our staff and volunteers. I hope you enjoy this publication, and best wishes in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Hughes
County Executive



OBSERVATIONS

BY DIANE NICKERSON



The eagle has landed!!! After planning and re-planning, the new building was finally ready for occupancy the second week of June - just in time for the absolute busiest time of the year. With assistance from the Park Commission maintenance department, many volunteers and the staff we completed the move in five days – and did not misplace a single patient in the process.

With a place for everything and everything in its place we prepared for our busy spring season. This year it was very exciting to treat our patients to the best of our abilities with more diagnostic tools readily at hand. The X-ray was up and running as well as the anesthesia equipment. Our volunteer veterinarians were able to handle diagnostics and surgery on site; reducing expense for them and stress to the patients, a better outcome for all.

Our 2009 volunteer orientation was the largest, most successful ever. Over 100 interested people spent a few hours learning about patient care volunteer work. We were pleased to welcome many new helping hands. Looking ahead, there will be more and varied volunteer opportunities and we look forward to having more members of the community join us on a regular basis.

County Naturalist Jenn Rogers has office space at the Wildlife Center. We are centrally located for her field work and enjoy having her share space with us. We are working on combined and complimentary program scheduling. Watch for announcements to come your way.

The staff and volunteers of MCWC welcomed old friends and new on February 18th of this year, when the Wildlife Center, Inc. hosted an Open House at the new building. Doreen Masset from the Inn of the Hawk provided refreshments and set an ambience for the evening, turning our public education room into a French cafe. Thanks to all of the sponsors – Jodi Specter (HyperGraphics), John Mierkrantz (AmeriCorp Press), Ron Kobli (Decoys and Wildlife Gallery), John Vanellis and Midmark Corporation – who made the evening a success.

Again, this year, I'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Ron Kobli, owner of the Decoys and Wildlife Art Gallery in Frenchtown. Ron holds an open house every year on the last Sunday in February. He invites us to come, present education programs, solicit donations and memberships and sell raffle tickets. At the end of the day he donates pieces from his gallery for the raffle. It is always

a great afternoon of old friends, tasty refreshments and making of new acquaintances. This year, we were a bit upstaged by the United States Olympic hockey team, who played in the finals that afternoon. Congratulations to the team on their silver medal!! We'll look forward to seeing everyone next year on February 27, 2011. Many thanks to Ron for the exposure to possible, new supporters and the many gifts he sends our way.

As always, more thanks than I can express to our volunteers. They show up week after week, month after month, and many, year after year. We could not do our work and be successful without them. Thanks to their efforts, MCWC treated 2,144 patients during 2009, releasing 62.3% back into the wild for a second chance. In total, these volunteers provided approximately 11,000 hours to MCWC and the wildlife of New Jersey. A big thanks also to our volunteers who do not have the ability to commit to animal care. They write thank you letters, organize and run events, staff the board of directors, design publications, handle donations and stuff envelopes. We would be lost without their help, as well.

Finally, thanks to you, our members. We spoke to over 12,000 of you this year by telephone, trying to answer your questions and concerns about your wild neighbors. We also visited your schools and civic groups and reached out to about 25,000 of you with our education programs. We continue to be here to serve you because you care enough to be there to support us. 🐾

from the director

FLYING HIGH

(Continued from page 1)

Nic and I had a brilliant plan; we would drive into the designated area and look for clumps of evergreens bursting through the barren landscape. We would then drive directly up to the evergreens, magically attach the hide boxes to the trees in the perfect spot, release the squirrels, and be back to the center in time to brag to everyone about how gifted we were. People would be talking about it for years! Sheer brilliance! Yeah...right.

We spotted the first batch of evergreens from the highway and headed straight for it. It was perfect! Big, bushy, healthy trees with lots of cover and loaded with food. All we had to do was trespass on private property - oops! Okay, not so perfect after all. We kept driving, and driving, and driving. We passed countless "perfect spots", conveniently located on private or park property. Back in an hour and a half? I do not think so!

We finally spotted a patch of evergreens that looked like it would work for one of the squirrel litters, and we could see it from the road so it had to be easy to reach, right? **Riiiiight.** Our goal was to carry the stepladder, camera, tools, hide box and "tank-o-squirrels" all in one trip. We were the models of efficiency. We headed towards the trees with all of our stuff, took a right turn off the trail, and walked straight up to the creek that was blocking our path. What the heck? Who put that there?!? Freezing, icy water rippled majestically over the rocky creek bottom. Nicole and I took one look at the creek, a look at each other, and we burst out laughing. Now what do we do? We unloaded our

goods and began placing wobbly, slippery stepping-stones into the creek. Did I say it would only take an hour and a half? Yeah...right.

A half an hour later we managed to get everything across the creek, one at a time, reload, and head for the trees. We managed to reach the trees relatively unscathed, and I was ready to attach the hide box. Wait a minute, how does this attach to the tree? Is there a hook or something? The roof of the box is too long so it will not sit flush against the tree, am I doing something wrong here? I quick call to Diane brought to us the realization that these were NOT the right hide boxes! Aaaahhhh! Are you kidding me? Now picture two grown women, delicately balanced on one

hole, clung to the front, and began to work his way around to the back of the box. "See..." I said, "No problem." And the squirrel plummeted to the ground, uninjured. Oops. We were later informed "Oh yeah, I forgot to tell you that you should use a wire brush to scrape the box so it is easier for them to climb on it." Good to know. So we climbed back up the ladder and attached a handy little limb-perch. This was only the first batch of squirrels! We still had another batch to go! Sweet honey-mustard! Do not forget our hike back to the car and repeat trip over the creek. Did I actually think I could have done this by myself?

Once loaded back into the car, we debated the risk of capture if we released the squirrels onto private property and made up really cool aliases. Thelma and Louise sounded good, but I think Lucy and Ethel might be more accurate. We drove less than a mile back up the main road to contemplate a group of trees that we had seen before. I guess we had paid our dues with the first batch of squirrels because we reached the trees with no complications and we had mastered our two-woman stepladder-balancing

act. We placed the hide box between existing branches of the tree so there would be no kamikaze exits, took some photos, and headed back to the car. "That wasn't so bad...and it only took three hours...three hours?!?!"

By now, we were sure that a search party had been sent for us, I was suffering from minor hypothermia, and I was sure that Nicole would be filing a request for a schedule change the second we got back to the center. Just another ordinary day of wildlife rehabilitation! 🐾



step ladder, trying to "McGyver" a hide box full of squirrels to a tree. Lucy and Ethel, eat your hearts out!

Once the box was attached, we stepped back to review our work and celebrate in the joy of the free squirrels. "Hey" Nicole said, "Should we put some kind of perch near the box so they can get out of the box?" "Naw, they will be fine. Those guys can cling to anything." Yeah...right. One of the squirrels popped his head out of the hole, checked us out, and decided to check out his new neighborhood. He climbed out of the

THE WILDLIFE CENTER, INC.

I HEART THE WILDLIFE CENTER

BY PAT HUIZING, PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, WILDLIFE CENTER, INC.



Board members, Sara Nicolls and Rebecca McCorry

Have you noticed lately that people have become pretty fast and loose with the word "love?" They'll say, "I love this song," or "I love your dress." But we were definitely feeling the **love** when we celebrated the grand opening of our beautiful, new, state-of-the-art facility at an Open House earlier this year.

On a cold, snow-covered day in February, over 100 people came out to see our "new digs." Masterfully orchestrated by Diane Nickerson, Director, and her staff, Jane Rakos-Yates, Nicole Bencivengo, Nicole Golden and Emily Perryman, visitors were treated to a behind-the-scenes tour guided by a cadre of volunteers who *loved* the opportunity to show off the place and speak proudly about what they do to help the animals. They were then treated to a magnificent spread of hors d'oeuvres

provided by the Inn of the Hawke in Lambertville, NJ

In addition, participants showed their *love* by purchasing T-shirts, auction items and "Hearts," helping us raise much needed funds that evening. All proceeds go directly to benefit the animals.

Heartfelt thanks go to all of the volunteers who assisted throughout the evening: Steve O'Neill, Rick Miller, Ben Strauss, Aggie Szilagyi, Pam Newitt, Kacy O'Brien, John Vanellis, Marsha Regn, Sharon Zimmerman, Debbie Smith, Rose Amato, Linda Covello, Jodi Harley and Jan Lilly. Board members Sharon Lauchaire, Rebecca McCorry, Sara Nicolls and assistant Karen Seehausen. A special thanks to our sponsors, Doreen Masset from the Inn of the Hawke for donating the food. Auction items

were donated by Ron Kobli from De-coys and Wildlife Gallery, Manette Jurczyk of MidMark, and John Vanelis from the Lawrence Gallery. Videography for the evening was donated by Tom Upton of BetaWorks. John Meikrantz from AmericorPress and Jodi Specter of Hypergraphics handled invitations and publicity.

If you are interested in helping us in any way, please visit our website www.wcinc.org or email us at MCWildlifeCenter@gmail.com. We would *love* to have you join us in support of Diane and her remarkable cadre of dedicated staff and volunteers. Really, I mean it! 🐾

Thanks!



PATIENT LOG

MCWC TREATED 2,144 ANIMALS DURING 2009



Albino Raccoon

It seems fitting, somehow, that at the same time we were moving into a new and exciting time at the Wildlife Center some of the most unusual animals arrived at our doorstep.

The first to arrive in 2009 was a young raccoon. Case number 2009-00780 arrived on June 5 at about six weeks old, apparently healthy, not injured and a BLONDE!! Found wandering a backyard, she had been separated from her mother and siblings.

No fractures, no injuries, very bright and alert, responsive and *growling*. All one and one-half pounds of her, ready to bite anything that stood still long enough. Her daily chart is full of notes like "Bites," "Aggressive,"

"Will not take bottle," and "Nasty".

After two weeks of quarantine, we introduced her to another raccoon about the same age, from the same area. Initial squabbling over space in the cage and food settled, they seemed to bond with each other and started to play as if they had been siblings all along. They were moved into an outside cage and conditioned for release.

Though her light coloring put her at a slight disadvantage in the wild, her attitude certainly made up for any other shortcomings. This was going to be a wild animal capable of staking out and defending a territory and identifying and protecting her resources. So, on August 31, she was released with her cage-mate to take her place

among New Jersey's wild population.

Our peregrine falcon, case # 1998-00036, came to the MCWC on February 25 of 1998. He was acquired from Toms River Avian Care (TRAC) for use in education programs. After being hit by a car during the fall migration and being treated at TRAC, it was determined that the fractured left wing that had originally grounded him was to keep him permanently earthbound. It had not healed well enough to provide him with the exacting flight needed by a falcon to survive in the wild.

He spent the next eleven and one-half years as an ambassador for his wild cousins, teaching many about his species and their special needs.

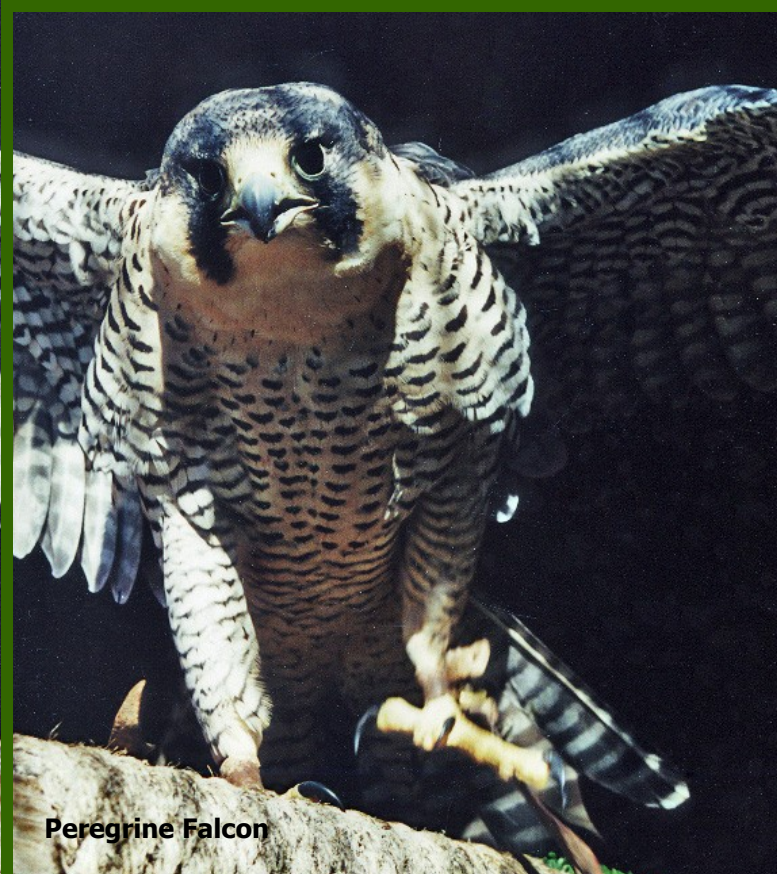
There were a number of outings to the Conserve Wildlife Foundation events as an ambassador for endangered and threatened species in the state. He made an annual trip to the New Jersey Education Association/ Conserve Wildlife Foundation 5th grade art awards program – Species on the Edge. A big hit at the Wildlife and Decoy Gallery in Frenchtown every year, people would come in off the street to see him in such an intimate setting.

So, it was with great sadness (and greater surprise), that he was found dead in his enclosure on December 21. A post-mortem exam did not yield any clues to his sudden death and we were all very sorry to lose this wonderful individual from our group of permanent residents.

The last to arrive on December 2 was case # 2009-02105. It was an immature Coopers' hawk. No wait, an immature northern goshawk? Or, maybe an immature red-shoulder hawk? Weight was of no help in trying to narrow down the choices since the bird was so emaciated. It affectionately became known as the "goshoulder".

It arrived after being hit by a car. Hypothermic, lethargic, concussed with a fractured radius – one of two bones between the elbow and wrist on both birds and

Red-shoulder hawk



Peregrine Falcon

humans. It was very thin and unable to stand. Dr. Batts recommended stabilizing the fracture with a wing wrap and providing supportive therapy.

So, we started a regimen of tube-feeding and hand-feeding small meals, still unsure of exactly what kind of a bird we were helping. Then one day, feeling much more itself, the bird began to vocalize and identification became unmistakable. We were treating an immature red shoulder hawk.

After a number of ups and downs, on March 16 it was moved to an outside cage to start pre-release conditioning. It needed a lot of exercise for the fractured wing and the atrophied muscles to accomplish hunting flight. It also needed to molt feathers; it had broken many wing and tail feathers while inside. This bird will be ready for release shortly, and will be fitted with a United States Fish and Wildlife Service band before going back to the Ewing neighborhood in which it was found. 🐾

Volunteers

Because one person can make a great difference

1st Year

BY MICHELE VANDERGRIFF, JESSICA VANDERGRIFF,
AND GENE MENGES

Wow! What a five-month experience we all have received! Our names are Michele, Jessica and Gene and we are all first-time volunteers at the Wildlife Center. May we take this time to tell you a little bit about each of our experiences?

Michele's' turn:

My name is Michele. My experience at the Wildlife Center has been such a positive one. I have always had great respect for the environment and the living things in it and feel my volunteer role has given me such a good feeling of accomplishment and self-worth. This Center is such a godsend. So many of our precious wildlife would perish without proper care for their injuries. Many would starve without basic nutritional help for those young animals who had been separated from their mothers or whose mothers had died.

If I were to choose my most memorable experience at the Center it would be when I carried one of the whitetail deer fawns from the carrier inside the Center to an outside pen. I felt I was carrying the future in my arms. This all-too-changing world, filled with the need to build, drill and tear down, needs wildlife and in turn wildlife needs us to protect and help it.

Now let me say something about the staff at the center. They are phenomenal! I am in awe of their extensive knowledge, expertise and their loving dedication to their work.



White tail deer fawn

Jessica's' turn:

My name is Jessica and I love using my spare time to volunteer at the Wildlife Center. I get such a good feeling inside knowing that I am helping God's many creatures.

My favorite animals at the center are the squirrels. Their bodies are so flexible, turning upside down and sideways in their carriers as if they were performing some acrobatic routine. When they eat, they hold onto their food with great care, as if not to lose any morsels.

I feel I have gained respect not only for squirrels but also for all the animals that arrive at the Center. For this I would like to thank the director, staff and the other volunteers for being patient with me and showing kindness while teaching me to help assist the animals.

(Continued on page 9)



VOLUNTEERS

Clinic Supervisors

Nancy Derrico	Mary Kawand
Nicole Golden	Mark Kimble
J. Heidi Mass	Connie Kliwinski
Linda Mihavetz	Cheryl Kobren
Grace Rarich	Cat Kostrzewa
Kristi Schollenberger	Tracy LaManna
	Janie Lamson
	Chris Laliberte
Lynn Abell	Rosemary Liccardo
Vania Allen	Jan Lilly
Rose Amato	Gwendolyn Lyons
Jami Arbizu	Gail Maloney
William Arland	Eleanor Marcus
Courtney Ashman	Gene Menges
Michelle Baffuto	Chris Mills
Gloria Blumig	Gale Mirzayanov
Greg Britton	Amber Nodler
Chris Browne	Kacy O'Brien
Ley Breuel	James Paris
Kelsey Bruno	Emily Perryman
Karen Cathers	Geoffery Peters
Jo Clancy	Todd Pletnick
Martin Clark	Kin Plett
Helena Clinton	Linda Proefrock
Kathy Coffey	Marsha Regn
Christine Coari	Elsje Reiss
Julie Cohen	Peggy Riccardi
Linda Covello	Ingrid Seadler
Anthony Davis	Karen Seehausen
Sharon Daily	Joseph Schmeltz
June Dennis	Kelleigh Simpson
Josephine Dutko	John Skitsko
Amanda Faillace	Debbie Smith
Mike Falcone	Jodi Specter
Linda Frederick	Patricia Stalter
Sandy Garrison	JoAnne Stransky
Jacque Genovasi	Ben Strauss
Helene Glaser	Tim Steinbeiser
Clark Glenn	Frank Stillwell
Joseph Gresko	Tracy Sullivan
Judy Guzy	Aggie Szilagyi
Lisa Hamilton	Lisa Terneson
Jodi Harley	Karen Theer
Lisa Hewitt	Jessica Vandergriff
Elizabeth Hill	Michele Vandergriff
Renee Hobbs	John Vanellis
Niveen Ismail	Barbara Warfel
Allison Jackson	Sam Wells
Kathy Jeter	Kathryn Williams
Harriet Johnson	Roseann Whypp
Jennifer Jones	Valerie Young
Lori Juillerat	Sharon Zimmerman
Carol Katona	

1st Year (cont.)

(Continued from page 8)

Gene's turn:

My name is Gene. I began volunteering at the Wildlife Center on Friday evenings in the spring of 2008. Not knowing in advance what was going to be expected from a volunteer, I assumed feeding a few animals was not going to be too difficult and we would be finished and on our way home in no time at all.

Well....how wrong was I? Although there were a few squirrels of different ages to be fed, there were many other tasks needing attention. We were given the rundown on those things and then sent to get them done. Geez.... who knew a squirrel had laundry? Who knew there were special diets to be prepared for each individual species? Who knew the next Friday the squirrel population would triple and now there were birds beginning to fill incubators in the room next to the younger squirrels? Who knew the following Friday we would be greeted by ducks, geese, more birds and of course more squirrels. Each one developed its own dirty laundry and now many different diets for each species.

I could go on and on talking about my experiences here but it would take more than a few short paragraphs to share them. In the past I would drive by an animal that had been killed along the road and not lend much thought to it. But now I realize that there would be young left behind and if not for a place like the wildlife center, those young would not receive a second chance to survive and be released back to nature. It is amazing to work with the staff and other volunteers and to see their dedication to these animals....Who Knew!!!!

All three of us would like to thank all the staff and volunteers of the center for their patience in training us and giving us the opportunity to be part of such a great mission. 🐾



Eastern grey squirrel

Wish List

Dream List

Van or Utility Vehicle 4x4 w/ AC

Office Supplies

Copier paper 8.5" x 11"

Liquid Paper

Ink cartridges for HP deskjet 6122

Surge Protector Strips

Animal Care and Handling

Arm & Hammer laundry detergent

Bleach

Food storage bags-gallon size

Heating pads (without auto-off)

Kennel Kabs - any size

Paper towels

Pet bowls

Pet Taxís - any size

Receiving blankets

Ketch-All Poles

Nets

Gloves

Animal Food

Wellness dry dog food (chicken)

Wellnes dry kitten food

Pedialyte

Gerbers baby food Banana

Gerbers baby food Veal

Medical Supplies

Fr feeding tubes: 3-1/2, 5 & 8

Gauze Pads: 4"x4" & 2"x2"

Non-adherent Pad

Hemostats

Kling Wrap: 1" x 60", 2" x 60", 3" x 60"

Latex exam gloves: Small, medium and large

Nutri-cal

Scalpels

Scalpel blades

Vet Wrap: 2" & 4"

Tegaderm 1620

PLEASE NOTE

WHERE **BRAND** NAMES ARE SPECIFIED
WE **CANNOT** ACCEPT SUBSTUTES

GREEN PAGE:

BY JENNIFER ROGERS
MERCER COUNTY NATURALIST



Invasive English Ivy (above), Invasive Kousa Dogwood (below)




GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE – NATURALLY

Go “green” in your garden by planting songbird and butterfly attracting flowers and shrubs. Most of our suburban or rural backyards are extensions of the forest or shrub land habitat that border it. So, spruce up your section of backyard habitat by planting beautiful, native plants!

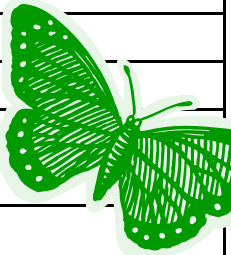

The majority of plants sold at nurseries do not naturally occur in or around New Jersey. Some of these nursery stock are considered invasive species; meaning that these plants are not indigenous to our area, are aggressive growing and extremely prolific. When an invasive in a garden escapes it has the potential to significantly alter natural landscapes – in a negative manner. A few ways in which invasive plants decrease a habitat’s integrity are by creating plant monocultures, which decreases local biodiversity and by replacing high-quality berry trees and shrubs with plants that produce lower quality fruits. Some invasive plants have the ability to alter soil chemistry and cast dense shade which makes it difficult for other plants to grow nearby. When invasive plants “take root” in natural areas, they not only displace indigenous flora, but also the native wildlife that is associated with them.

Here are a few plant lists for garden enthusiasts to remember this spring:

DO NOT PLANT – KNOWN INVASIVES	Attraction
Japanese barberry (<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>)	red berries; bird attractant
orange eye butterflybush (<i>Buddleja davidii</i>)	nectar plant; butterfly attractant
oriental bittersweet (<i>Celastrus orbiculatis</i>)	red berries; bird attractant
burning bush (<i>Euonymus alata</i>)	red berries; bird attractant
English ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>)	ground cover
purple loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>)	nectar plant; butterfly attractant
Chinese silvergrass (<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>)	autumn color/ seed plumes
Japanese pachysandra (<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>)	ground cover
Bradford or Callery pear (<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>)	early spring flowers
Japanese wisteria (<i>Wisteria floribunda</i>)	showy flowers
oriental photinia (<i>Photinia villosa</i>)	berries/ fall color
Kousa dogwood (<i>Cornus kousa</i>)	white flowers in May



NATIVE TREES & SHRUBS	Attraction
redbud (<i>Cercis Canadensis</i>)	spring color – pink
American persimmon (<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>)	fall fruits – orange
Eastern red cedar (<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>)	year round color; attracts birds
flowering dogwood (<i>Cornus florida</i>)	white blooms; red berries; used by wildlife
Pagoda dogwood (<i>Cornus alternifolia</i>)	white flowers, fragrant; birds eat fruit
winterberry holly (<i>Ilex verticillata</i>)	red berries persist through winter, food source for wildlife in winter months.
American holly (<i>Ilex opaca</i>)	year round color
serviceberries (<i>Amelanchier spp.</i>)	early summer food source
sweet pepperbush (<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>)	white flowers, butterfly attractant
mountain azalea (<i>Rhododendron prinophyllum</i>)	pink flowers
blueberries (<i>Vaccinium spp.</i>)	white flowers, edible fruit; loved by wildlife
NATIVE FLOWERS AND GRASSES	Attraction
wintergreen (<i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>)	shade-loving; evergreen
Virginia bluebells (<i>Mertensia virginica</i>)	shade-loving; pink flowers turn blue
violets (<i>Viola spp.</i>)	shade-loving; small delicate flowers in white, yellow and purple
purple milkweed (<i>Asclepias purpurascens</i>)	pink flowers, butterfly attractant
butterfly weed (<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>)	bright orange flowers, butterfly attractant
Joe Pye weed (<i>Eupatorium purpureum</i>)	large pink flower, butterfly attractant
blue flag iris (<i>Iris versicolor</i>)	blue flowers
bee balm (<i>Monarda didyma</i>)	red flower, butterfly and hummingbird attractant
orange coneflower (<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>)	yellow flower, attracts birds and butterflies
goldenrods (<i>Solidago spp.</i>)	yellow, late summer color;
New York ironweed (<i>Veronia novaboracensis</i>)	large purple flowers, butterfly attractant
switch grass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i>)	full sun
indian grass (<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>)	tall growth






In addition to naturalizing your garden, there are other ways to reduce the spread of invasive plants. Several local organizations host volunteer work days to remove invasive plants from parks and open space. The Mercer County Park Commission works in cooperation with the Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team to locate and eradicate populations of emerging invasive plant species in the County parks. To join in on a volunteer day, contact Jenn Rogers, County Naturalist at jrogers@mercercounty.org or by calling 609-883-6606 x 112. If you are interested in learning more about invasive plants and/or native planting visit the CJISST website: www.cjisst.org or the Stewardship Roundtable website: www.stewardshiproundtable.org. 🐾





HELP US HELP YOU

- ☒ If you find an animal in distress, please keep it warm and quiet.
- ☒ Handle the animal as little as possible, keeping it away from pets and children.
- ☒ Any attempt to feed or force water may not be in the best interest of the animal.
-  Call the Center at (609) 883-6606. An animal may not actually need assistance, and bringing them in may cause them more harm.
- ☐ Although the Center will gladly offer referrals, domestic animals cannot be accepted as patients.
- ☐ Unfortunately, the Mercer County Wildlife Center is not equipped to provide a pick-up service.
-  Remember...an animal in distress may not know that you are there to help. Extreme caution should always be used when assisting an injured animal.